REMARKS

In response to the official office action of June 2, 2005, applicants have canceled claims 1-4 in view of the prior art. Applicants have also rewritten claim 5 as a new base claim including the limitations of the original base claim and any intervening claims. In addition, applicants have amended the abstract of the disclosure to overcome the objection of the examiner, and also have amended claim 6 to overcome the examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112. Further, applicants have amended the specification and claims 5 & 6 by deleting the word "supported" following the word "shoulder" and substituting the word "protection" to correctly identify element 19 as shown in the drawings. The applicants believe it was inherently understood that the original shoulder supported members are designed to protect the user's shoulders. To clarify this, the applicants have renamed element 19. As a result, applicants disagree with the examiner's rejection of claim 5, because none of the prior art describes shoulder protection members comprising longitudinally-curved plates and having apertures being disposed therethrough near back edges thereof. Bachner Jr., in particular, does not describe nor suggest shoulder protection members including longitudinally-curved plates. Instead, Bachner Jr. describes adjustable straps which connect the two panels.

Applicants have not added any new subject matter to the claims and respectfully request that the examiner takes the foregoing into consideration and that they be granted Letters Patent for their invention.

Respectfully Submitted,
For: John K. Langley et al

By: _____

David A. Langbeck
Reg. No. 34,861 (763) 497-0529
P.O. Box 500
St. Michael, Minnesota 55376

PAGE 7/7 * RCVD AT 7/25/2005 3:04:26 PM [Eastern Daylight Time] * SVR:USPTO-EFXRF-6/29 * DNIS:2738300 * CSID: * DURATION (mm-ss):01-34